

Star Wars: A New Hope AU

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Category: Star Wars

Genre: Adventure, Sci-Fi

Language: English

Characters: Anakin Skywalker, Leia O., Luke S., PadmÃ© Amidala

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2016-04-13 06:41:07

Updated: 2016-04-17 19:37:48

Packaged: 2016-04-27 18:51:32

Rating: T

Chapters: 8

Words: 7,857

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: The Skywalker Family has been in hiding since the downfall of the Republic. When Senator Leia Skywalker is captured aboard a Rebel Frigate and taken to the Death Star, her father, brother, and mother have to join Han and the gang aboard the Falcon to save the day. Massively AU. Inspired in part by the beautiful work of Scott W. Ferguson. Comments and criticism welcome.

1. Chapter 1

****Note:** So this is my attempt at writing an AU story. I have read quite a few of them. I like some of them more than others. The influence of Scott W. Ferguson should be evident here as he is the master of this particular kind of _Star Wars_ storytelling. I urge you to read his four part _Star Wars: Altered Universe_ (_Episode II; Episode III; Episode III.5; and the as-yet-unfinished Episode IV).
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****Obviously** all rights go to Lucasfilm and Disney, I own none of this...I am just playing in the sandbox of a world created by others. The first piece of this story does contain some actual dialogue from _A New Hope_. ******

****Would love to hear all comments and constructive criticism. Let's be off.****

* * *

><p>Chapter I

"Boy, it's lucky you have these compartments," said Luke Skywalker as he poked his head out. Han Solo was less sanguine about their situation.

"I use them for smuggling. I never thought I'd be smuggling myself in

them. This is ridiculous. Even if I could take off, I'd never get past the tractor beam." The smiling face of Ben Kenobi turned to Han Solo.

"Leave that to me."

"Damn fool, I knew you were going to say that."

"Who's the more foolish? The fool, or the fool who follows him?" Anakin Skywalker shot a glance at Ben Kenobi as he raised himself out after his old mentor.

"Well, we have to find where they've got Leia."

"Dad, you really think she's here?"

"I know it Luke." Anakin exchanged an uneasy glance with Ben Kenobi as the two of them lifted themselves fully out of the _Millennium Falcon's_ compartments.

They had blasted out of Mos Eisley spaceport with Storm Troopers on their tail and several Star Destroyers in hot pursuit. When they arrived, they found Alderaan blasted to pieces. Chewbacca growled as one of their number grabbed a fallen troopers' rifle. It was PadmÃ©.

"We need to find her Ani."

"All rightâ€¦|lead the way." She smiled at him.

"I always do."

* * *

><p>Seven Years Earlier

Anakin was fixing a turbine by his moisture farm. In the distance he saw Luke and Leia chasing each other with wooden swords laughing and dashing across the sand. He smiled as he shook his head. The two had grown much in the intervening time. They had been living in hiding on Tatooine since the birth of the twins twelve years' earlier. PadmÃ© and him discussed where it would be safer for themâ€¦"with her family in Naboo or with Owen and Beru on Tatooine. Naboo would be too close to Palpatine's troops.

Nevertheless, the twins seemed not to know the difference. They spent summers with their mother's family and their cousin's in Naboo, returning back to Tatooine with their aunt and uncle. But perhaps their most favorite "uncle" was old Ben Kenobi who lived passed the Dune Sea but frequented the Skywalker household on a regular basis. Anakin felt a familiar presence behind him.

"Have you seen Luke and Leia?" PadmÃ© asked her husband.

"You just missed them." He paused as he closed the panel he was working on. He pointed at the mess of sand in the distance.

"Well, they're definitely going to have to wash up before dinner." Anakin gave her a wink.

"I'd say." She put her arm around her husband.

"But they're happy." His smile disappeared.

"And I want to keep it that way Padmé." She moved away.

"Ani, we should consider Bail's offer."

"Absolutely not."

"It would mean so much to Leia. She wants to follow in my footsteps, they're can't be anything wrong with that." He sighed as he sat down on the portico of his domed house.

"I know it would Padmé. Do you think I want to deprive her of those opportunities?" Anakin paused to wipe some of the sweat from his face. "It's too dangerous for her."

"They can't stay here forever." She held her tongue and then added. "Besides, they know how to use the Force. Surely that'll keep them safe wherever they go." Anakin's eyes widened as he stood up and embraced his wife.

"Ben and I have taught them a lot. But it's only enough for them to manipulate Storm Troopers and maybe shield their presence temporarily. If the Emperor or his agents were ever to find them—" He held back tears. "I can't bear to see that happen." Suddenly, they heard their two twelve-year-olds laughing. Luke shouted loudly.

"Dad, you had to see what Leia did it was crazy." Padmé smiled. She hugged her husband tightly and kissed his cheek.

"Go Anakin—they want their father with them." He ran toward them and tackled his son.

* * *

<p>Later that evening.

There was an unusual silence at the Skywalker dinner table. Padmé and Anakin looked at each other.

"All right you two, what's going on?" Leia pushed around food looking anxious at her mother. Padmé spoke up.

"I think Leia has something to say to you." Anakin looked at her lovingly.

"What is it princess?"

"I wanted to ask you about the leadership academy—for the Imperial Senate—" Anakin shifted in his seat but remained calm.

"Okay."

"Dad, I'm twelve years old. They start recruiting junior leaders from the Core Worlds right around this time." Anakin nodded his head as she spoke admiring his daughter's way of crafting an argument. "We're

not anywhere near those worldsâ€¦and I justâ€¦I feelâ€¦" She paused unsure if what she would say next would hurt her father's feelings. "â€¦I think I want to follow Senator Organa's advice and go to study at Alderaan." Anakin stopped eating. He closed his eyes drawing deeply on the Force. He opened his eyes and smiled.

"Yes." Luke 's face beamed as his sister nearly jumped out of her seat.

"Dad you mean it?"

"Yes sweetheart. Your mother and I spoke about it earlier todayâ€¦and if this is what you really want to do. We'll do it." Leia ran to her father and hugged him.

2. Chapter 2

****Chapter 2****

Seven Years Later (Two Days Before The Arrival of the Falcon_ on the Death Star_)

Anakin Skywalker was furious. He had just seen Artoo's message with his daughter's call for help. Her voice rang through the corridor of Ben Kenobi's house loudly.

"__Help me Obi-Wan Kenobi, you're my only hope."_

"Turn it off," Anakin growled. Luke, PadmÃ©, and Ben said nothing. They sat there in silence for a moment. "How could she have joined the Alliance without us knowing?" He stood up as he spoke.

"Did you really think she could stay out of it knowing the pain you and PadmÃ© went throughâ€¦knowing what the Emperor tried to do with you? Did you really expect her to stay out of that fight?" Asked Obi-Wan.

"It's not her fight Ben! It's mine." Ben Kenobi shook his head disapprovingly. Anakin slammed his fist against a wall as his anger gave way to profound sadness. "I should've been on that ship not her!" PadmÃ© spoke up.

"What happened to Leia isn't your fault. Stop blaming yourself."

"Anakin, this could be the will of the Forceâ€¦" Obi-Wan spoke softly to his old friend. "We all knew that being hiding was never a permanent state of affairs." Anakin scoffed at him, knowing he was right.

"Yeah wellâ€¦I was hoping we'd be able to wait a little longer." He paused as he sat next to his old mentor. "She asked for you."

"She asked for Obi-Wan_ _Kenobi_. Not for her Uncle Ben." Anakin realized what his friend was saying.

"You're right. She knew you were a Force-user...but she never knew your real name was Obi-Wan. She didn't know who you really were."

"Bail must have told her much about my counterpart's fabled exploits." The two shared an uncomfortable laugh given the situation. Luke spoke up, he looked confused.

"What are you guys talking about?" Anakin looked at PadmÃ© who let out a small sigh.

"I think it's time you told them the whole story Ani. All of it."

"Mom, what are you saying?"

"Sweetheart," PadmÃ© sat next to her son. "What we told you kids growing up was trueâ€|"

"From a certain point of view," Anakin cut in as he moved closer to his son.

"What's there to know? I mean Mom was an Imperial Senator. Dad had to rescue you from the Emperor to protect you from his assassins. Are you saying that's not true?" Luke's parents looked at each other. Anakin spoke first.

"She was a senator Luke. And yes the Emperor put a heavy price on her head. But I wasn't just a simple pilot who fell in love with your mother." He pulled his old lightsaber from his side and handed it to Luke whose eyes bulged.

"You were a Jedi Knight?" Luke asked excitedly.

"I am a Jedi Knight. You don't stop being one Luke."

"And Mom, were you really a senator?" PadmÃ© brushed a few strands from Luke's head.

"Yes. But you see I was a senator in the Old Republic. When I was younger, I was a queenâ€|the queen of Naboo." Luke shook his head in shock and disbelief.

"Why didn't you tell us this right away?"

"We wanted toâ€|so many times Lukeâ€|it was difficultâ€|but for our own protectionâ€|for your safetyâ€|we had to protect you all from this." Kenobi stood up and walked toward the concerned parents.

"The Force is strong with you and your sister Luke. You've felt it. So has she. We have no choice now but to get involved." He paused and gave Luke a smile. "You must learn the ways of the Force if you are to come with me to Alderaan." Anakin shot a look at his mentor.

"Alderaan? He's not going to Alderaan Ben. We've already got one of our children in trouble with the Empire, we can't put his life at risk either."

"Anakin, listen to me." The younger Jedi sat down next to his wife and son. "I can't do this alone old friend. Like it or notâ€|I am getting too old for this sort of thing."

>"Don't talk that way Ben," said Anakin. "You're still the great Jedi

Master I know you are." This elicited laughter from Kenobi.<p>

"Your daughter needs our helpâ€”_all of our help_."

"Dad," Luke stood up as he started speaking. "Uncle Ben's right. And don't think for one minute I am sitting this one out. If I am going to be a Jedi like you, I have to do thisâ€”I have to help save Leia." PadmÃ© gave her husband a knowing smile as he dropped his shoulders and sighed.

"Very well then, Luke you will come with us. We will save your sister and regroup with the rest of the Alliance." The time for hiding had long since ended, though none of them knew where this journey would take them.

* * *

><p>Outside Kenobi's house, Anakin conferred with his old master.<p>

"How are we going to explain this to Owen and Beru?"

"I think that's the least of our worries Anakin." Anakin caught PadmÃ© embracing their son by the side of Ben Kenobi's small home.

"If anyone knows where she's was headed it's got to be Bail." Ben nodded his head in agreement. But it was clear that he was lost in thought. Something else was occupying his mind.

"It's difficult to sense the future," said Ben somberly.

"There's something you're not telling me Obi-Wan."

"I may not make it out of this one aliveâ€”" Anakin chuckled uncomfortably.

"Come onâ€”you said that we when landed in the nest of gondarks and when we were in the arena in Geonosisâ€”"

"True, but that was almost twenty years agoâ€”we were much younger thenâ€”_I was much younger then_â€”brash, full of bravadoâ€”we were all in a very different place back then." He raised his hood up to cover himself. "Regardless, my destiny lies in a different path than yours Anakin. It always has. You know whose counsel you must seek if I don't make it..."

"Where do I even start looking for him? How do you know that he's even alive after all this time?" Ben Kenobi shot him a knowing smile.

"We would've felt his passing." He paused for a moment. "You will find him in the Dagobah system."

"Are you serious? There's nothing there."

"Precisely, my old apprentice."

****Brief note: Here we return to the present. Some dialogue is the same from the movie, but obviously certain events are changing. Would love to hear any comments or reviews please.****

* * *

<p>Chapter 3

Aboard the Death Star â€" Present Day

They had made quick work of the small garrison in the control room. Threepio spoke to Kenobi.

"We found the computer outlet, sir." Kenobi fed the information into the computer as a map showing the layout of the Death Star popped up on the view screen. Anakin stood close by his old mentor, his wife behind him.

"Plug in. Artoo should be able to interpret the entire Imperial network." Artoo gave a beep and a whistle. Threepio spoke up.

"He says he's found the main computer to power the tractor beam that's holding the Falcon here." Anakin looked over the data with Ben.

"Obi-Wan, you hit one of those nodes and that tractor beam won't be able to hold us." The older Jedi rubbed his beard nodding his head in agreement. He paused for a moment and looked at his old friend.

"I don't think you boys can help. I must go alone." Han spoke up.

"Whatever you say. I've gotten all more than I bargained for on this trip already."

"Uncle Ben," Luke spoke, "I want to go with you." Ben looked at his "nephew" with eyes that were a mix of sadness and love. Even PadmÃ© found herself moved by Ben Kenobi's forlorn look. Anakin said nothing. He simply stared intently at his old master. _So this is what he meant back home_, he thought to himself.

"Be patient Luke," Ben spoke. "Stay here with your parents and watch over the droids."

"But they can take care of themselvesâ€|" Luke chirped. Ben grabbed hold of Luke's arm.

"They must be delivered safely or other star systems will suffer them same fate as Alderaan." He paused for a moment. "Besides, you have a sister to save, don't you?" There were tears in Luke's eyes. Ben spoke to Luke, but kept his gaze fixed on Anakin Skywalker as he opened the blast doors. "Your destiny lies along a different path than mine." He paused for a beat, then said, "The Force will be with youâ€|always." The older Jedi raised his hood so that he covered his head and made his way out the as the doors closed behind him. All of them stood there silently contemplating the fate of Uncle Ben, while Chewie and Han stood aside aloof from them.

"Lukeâ€|" Anakin called out.

"Yeah Dad?"

"We have to find your sister. Ben will meet us later, I'm sure of it."

"All right." Artoo gave a few more beeps.

"What is it? What's he saying?" Asked Luke.

"He's saying, 'I've found her! She's here.' " Luke turned around too stunned to believe Anakin's words.

"How did you make that all out?" Anakin looks at Padmé and chuckles a bit.

"Son, this little droid and I have been through a lot of tough scrapes together. I had to learn to understand him quickly in the heat of battle." Luke nods his head in admiration of his father.

"Where is she Artoo?" He let out a few more beeps and whistles. Padmé spoke up.

"What did he say?"

"Level Five. Detention block AA-23." He gulped down hard as he turned to his wife. "They've scheduled her to be executed within the hour."

"Ani, we have to get her out of there now."

"We will Padmé." At this point the gruff voice of Han Solo spoke up.

"I'm not going anywhere." Luke's patience with Solo finally reached the breaking point.

"Force's sake Han, she's my sister." He paused for a moment. "They're going to execute her. Look, a few minutes ago you said you didn't want to just wait here to be captured. Now all you want to do is stay?"

"Marching into the detention area is not what I had in mind." Before Luke could respond, Anakin stepped forward.

"Captain, I understand your reticence. But I guarantee you'll be paid much more than we originally offered you back on Tatooine if you'll help us. We can't do this alone." He looked away sensing something important about Solo. "We can't do this without you Han." Somehow the calm words and demeanor of Anakin Skywalker penetrated the tough exterior of the hardened smuggler.

"Chewie, what do you think of this?" Chewie grunted,

"_We've gotten out of worse. Plus the money's worth it._"

"All right. Count us in Anakin." He paused for a moment as he sat back down. "What's your plan?"

"I'd thought you'd never ask Captain."

4. Chapter 4

****Chapter 4****

"This idea is not going to work."

"Why didn't you say so before?"

"I did say so before." Anakin rolled his eyes as he adjusted his own Storm Trooper helmet. The four of them donned the outfits and left Threepio and Artoo "safely" behind in the barracks. They escorted Chewbacca in the middle who looked none too pleased to be wearing binders on his hands.

They rode up the turbolift in silence. Suddenly the doors opened to reveal a tall officer who approached them immediately.

"Where are you taking thisâ€|thing?" Anakin spoke up.

"Prisoner transfer from Block 1138." The officer seemed a bit perplexed.

"I wasn't notified about this, I'll have to clear it." Anakin removed his helmet and stared intently at the officer.

"You don't need do clear it, you have all the information you need." The officer stood there without saying a word. He seemed confused. Finally, he spoke out in a commanding tone.

"We have all the information we need."

"You won't need the troopers anymore," Anakin gestured to the remaining guards. "They can return to their barracks." The officer parroted the lines like clockwork.

"We won't need you troopers anymore. Return to your barracks." The troopers saluted and descended down the turbolift. After they had gone, Anakin motioned for Han to gently remove the restraints around Chewbacca's wrists.

"You will help us transfer Senator Organa to another cell." Anakin spoke, never taking his eyes away from the officer's glazed face.

"I will help you transfer the senator." He paused as he punched in some keys in his console. "She is in cell 2187, should I accompany you?"

"There's no need for that commander," Anakin said. "You can go about your business and join your comrades below." He bowed and left the room. Han Solo was flabbergasted.

"How did you pull that off Anakin?"

"The Force can have a strong impact on the weak-minded." He smirked at Han. "Are you still an unbeliever Captain?" Han let out an uncomfortable sigh.

"I don't knowâ€¦I can't explain that." PadmÃ© removed her helmet and moved toward the long corridor filled with cells.

"Ani, here's her cell." Anakin followed close behind his wife with Luke in tow. He turned to Han Solo.

"You and Chewie stay back, that ruse I played won't work forever. We may need to blast our way out of here yet." The two of them nodded as they positioned themselves close to the turbolift by the console. Pulling out his lightsaber, Anakin ignited his blue blade and plunged it into the control panel opening the door. There inside laying down in white robes was Leia. She got up in a hurry, amazed at what she saw in front of her. She quickly ran and embraced her father.

"Dad? What are you doing here?"

"Well, we got your messageâ€¦you know the one you left in Artoo for _Obi-Wan_ Kenobiâ€¦somehow you knew to get in touch with Uncle Ben didn't you?" It was then she noticed the hilt in his hand. She was astounded.

"It was a feelingâ€¦the Force." She paused. "You are a Jedi. Uncle Ben too?" He nodded his head. "What do you mean _we_? Who else is with you?" Anakin smiled and stepped back revealing PadmÃ© and Luke. Leia smiled as she hugged her mother and her brother. "I'm so glad to see you all."

5. Chapter 5

****Chapter 5****

Three Years Earlier.

Leia Skywalker was rummaging through her father's things on a much-needed vacation from her studies on Alderaan. There was a large wooden box that caught her attention. The wood look faded with age, as if someone hadn't opened it in a while. Her parents had never spoken much of the past with the kidsâ€¦except to tell them how their mother had been an Imperial Senator who was marked for assassination by the Emperor Palpatine. Their father, a no-name pilot who would escort her on her trips had saved her lifeâ€¦and that was when they fell in love. Shortly after they married and had to go in the hiding. This was the extent of the story they were told. Along with one other piece of informationâ€¦they were told about the mysterious energy field of the Forceâ€¦that their father and Uncle Ben could use it. But how they learned to use it and why they weren't so keen on using it in the present was never explained. They knew all of this because Anakin and Ben would show them some occasional "tricks" as they called it.

Luke was largely satisfied by these answers. He was a simpler man, who took after the mechanical skills of their father. But these stories never entirely convinced Leia. In this respect she took after their mother. She wanted to know more. The little bit that she knew about the "Living Force" told her that some of the answers were in that box that stood in front of her. She opened it and her eyes were amazed by what she sawâ€¦a small metallic cylinder with some odd buttons resting on a comfortable bed of rags. It was a curious object. She was about to grab it when she felt her father behind

her.

"You in there, Leia?" Anakin asked as he moved toward the door. She quickly shut the box.

"Yes I'm here Dad." She turned around him with a cute smile on her face. He gave an odd look. Leia had found that it was all but impossible to keep anything from her father. He rolled up his sleeves as he looked at her face.

"Soâ€¦find anything interesting here?"

"No, Dadâ€¦why would you say that? It's just a bunch of junk here." She replied sheepishly.

"Right, bunch of junkâ€¦" He chuckled himself as he said the words. Something moved her to speak.

"Dadâ€¦" She paused thinking about her words. "You were more than a pilot weren't you?" He sighed taking his eyes off of her. This was always his "tell." Anakin Skywalker was many thingsâ€¦a mechanical genius, a hotshot pilotâ€¦but he was not a liar. At least, he wasn't a very good one.

"What makes you say that, sweetheart?" He asked in a measured tone. _She knows a lot already_, he thought to himself. _But she can't quiet put her finger on just what it is that she knows_.

"I just know it. Every time Mom looks at youâ€¦I see sadness but I also see admiration. It's almost as ifâ€¦" she paused again searching for the right words. "It's almost as if Mom knows that she never has to be afraid when you are aroundâ€¦you'll protect her with your lifeâ€¦but how does she know that so well?" Leia felt something stir inside of her, beckoning herâ€¦pleading with her to say what she was really thinking. "Dadâ€¦it's like you're a hero with no fear." She laughed to herself thinking that her garden variety fatherâ€¦a lowly moisture farmer at thatâ€¦could be anything like a mighty warrior. "I don't know what I am talking about. You probably just think I'm spouting out nonsense."

She's very perceptive. He thought to himself as he stroked his chin. "Believe it or not Leiaâ€¦I don't think you are being silly at all." He took a deep breath in and sat next to her. "You have a remarkable set of insightsâ€¦the Force flows so strongly inside of you. I just wish things were differentâ€¦" He paused for a second. "Sweetheart, I am no hero. Many others have claim to that title, but not me." His daughter gave him a weird look.

"Dadâ€¦you are a hero, you know?"

"Oh really?" He cocked a broad smile.

"Yes, you are my hero." There were some tears in his eyes as he held his daughter close.

* * *

><p>The Present Day â€¦ _Detention Center at the Death Star_

"Look, I hate to break up this family reunion," spoke the gruff voice of Han Solo. "But I think we need to get out of here quickly." Leia looked at the cocky smuggler and was struck by his cavalier attitude.

"Who's this guy?" She said. Before Anakin could get a word in edgewise, Han answered.

"This guy, is the one whose gonna rescue you senatorâ€¦" Leia was unimpressed and simply carried on without bothering to hear the rest of his explanation.

"I think my father just handled that." Han stood back and gave a look to Chewie.

"Really sister? Why don't you ask your dad how we got here in the first place?" She was about to respond when blaster fire filled the corridor they were in.

"Get back!" Anakin shouted as he drew his lightsaber protectively. PadmÃ© gripped her blaster rifle tightly and began firing a volley forward.

"I'm covering you Anakin!" They exchanged a look before he turned to Han and his children.

"Find a way out of here. We'll give you time." Leia spoke up nervously.

"Dad, we aren't going anywhere without you." He closed his eyes as the blaster fire came closer.

"Leia you were right about me." She didn't fully understand his point. "This is what I do. I've been in far worse situations like this with your mother at my side." Leia pushed back the tears. "Go with Captain Solo and your brother and get out of here. We will meet down at his ship in the hangar bay. I promise you that." Without saying another word he gripped his blade and began deflecting blaster shots. He leapt up into the air and sliced off the arm of one Storm Trooper, plunging his blade into another's chest. All the while, PadmÃ© followed close behind him taking out other waiting troops. Leia turned to see the other side of the corridor.

"Can't get out that way." She paused turning to Han. "Looks like you guys blew our only escape route."

"Maybe you'd like it back in your cell senator!" Said Han in a demeaning tone.

"This is some rescue! You came in here, but didn't you have a plan for getting out?" Leia asked. Han replied curtly.

"Your father's the brains sweetheart." She pulled the blaster rifle from Luke's hand.

"Give that to me Luke."

"Leiaâ€¦" Before Luke could say anything she fired at the side opening a big gaping hole.

"What the hell are you doing?"

"Someone's got to save our skins! Into the garbage chute, fly boy."

6. Chapter 6

Chapter 6

Anakin made his way down another corridor with his wife next to him.

"That was the last of them PadmÃ©." He extinguished his blade and held it down. She lowered her rifle as they stood to one side.

"Where are the others?" She asked.

"Wellâ€¦with any luck they'll find a way out of the big pile of junk they fell intoâ€¦and find their way back to the docking bay." PadmÃ© pushed her brown hair aside.

"Where did you say they went?"

"The part underneath the detention block is the maintenance sector. They fell into one of the trash compactors."

"Leia is not going to be happy."

"Well, she takes after you PadmÃ©." They exchanged an uneasy laugh. Anakin paused for a moment. "Ben is going to do more than shut down the tractor beam." PadmÃ©'s eyes widened.

"You think he'll confront her?"

"I know it."

"We need him Ani." PadmÃ© replied.

"He has his own path to follow. Ben made that very clear to me before we left." In the distance they heard the sound of blaster fire. PadmÃ© shuddered.

"It's our kids." Anakin nodded replying to her.

"They made it out." She gripped her rifle lifting up.

"You know what means?" She said. He smiled as he ignited his lightsaber.

"Let's get out of here." They both ran in the direction of the fighting.

* * *

><p>Luke and Leia where firing back at Storm Troopers trying to make their way to the docking bay. Suddenly a familiar humming sound came from behind them as they saw their father and mother. PadmÃ© spoke up loudly with her commanding voice.<p>

"Get behind us, now!" She lifted up her blaster and fired repeatedly as Anakin took down three more troopers. There was an eerie quiet.

"Where's Solo?" Asked Anakin. Luke spoke up.

"He went charging after a bunch of troopers with Chewie."

"He certainly has courage," said Leia. Luke responded.

"What good will it do us if he gets himself killed?" The four of them ran off in the direction of the docking bay. They made it in time to run into Han Solo and Chewbacca. Solo looked back.

"What kept you?"

"We ran into some old friends," Leia said. She looked at the ship in front of her. Anakin spoke up.

"Ship all right?"

"Seems so, hopefully that old man knocked out that tractor beam" Leia spoke.

"You came in that thing? You are braver than I thought." Han Solo gave her a snarky smile.

"If those troopers don't move out of the way we won't be going anywhere." Said Padmé. Anakin heard the distinctive sounds of lightsabers striking each other. Within minutes of whatever commotion was going on the troopers moved away from guarding the ship.

"Look at that!" Luke exclaimed.

"Now's our chance, let's go!" Han said. The six of them quickly made their way across. Anakin stopped short. Looking at the old but graceful figure of Obi-Wan Kenobi engaged in a heated lightsaber duel with a darkly-clad Asajj Ventress.

"Go on without me," he said. Padmé shouted back to her husband.

"Anakin we have to go!" Kenobi heard the commotion. He turned and smiled to his old friend.

"Ben you don't have to do this come with us." Anakin said through the Force-connection with his

"Remember, the Force will be with you always." Kenobi replied. He lifted up his blade in a salute as he closed his eyes and Asajj Ventress delivered the killing blow. To everyone's surprise, there was no body. Obi-Wan Kenobi simply disappeared leaving his robes and saber to fall to the ground. Anakin Skywalker was amazed and totally oblivious to the fighting and blaster fire coming from both sides. The voice of Ben Kenobi rang through his ears. "Run, Anakin, Run!"

He quickly ran back and boarded the Falcon.

7. Chapter 7

****Note:** Thanks for all the reviews and comments. This chapter is a bit longer. We are going back to the distant past here...and we will revisit the AU version of certain events that take place in Revenge of the Sith. Please be patient. After a few chapters or so of this back story (which Anakin is telling to his kids) we will return back to the present. But it is necessary for set up. And yes, my intention is to do an entire AU of the Original Trilogy. Once again, keep the comments, suggestions, and constructive criticism coming. Also, brief note...in my telling of the story there are definitely some radical changes to what happens in Revenge of the Sith. Obi-Wan is already known as Ben Kenobi by this point, he knows about Anakin's marriage (but no one else does...more on that to come), and already the Republic is testing out early versions of Y-Wings and X-Wings. So please do not be alarmed, I do know that it's unconventional to go that route, but that's why I am writing an AU.**

* * *

<p>Chapter 7

Many thoughts ran through Anakin Skywalker's mind as the Falcon launched into space. He sat around the dejarik table lost in thought. The entire Skywalker family was reunited and for that he was happy. None of them said a word. All of them had known Ben Kenobi—now the kids had lost their favorite "uncle" and Anakin had lost the only man who had come close to being a father and a brother to him.

"Dad—" Leia spoke up. Anakin barely turned to her to respond.

"Don't—please—I am all right sweetheart. I am just so glad you're safe." She could see that he was holding back tears. He just shook his head in disbelief.

"I just can't believe he's gone." Padmé rubbed her husband's shoulder.

"There was nothing you could have done Anakin." Anakin looked at her sadly.

"I could've have intervened—I wanted to—but he stopped me. He stopped me dead in my tracks and wouldn't let me. Why—why did he have to do that?" Padmé kissed her husband's forehead gently.

"Because it was his destiny." Anakin nodded his head in agreement. He took a series of deep breathes—closing his eyes—centering his thoughts. Then he turned to Leia.

"Young lady—you have a lot of explaining to do." He pointed his finger at her then cracked his old familiar smile. "I guarantee you that you're grounded after this stunt."

"Dad I'm not the only one who kept secrets in this family —" She paused and placed her hands on her hips mockingly. "After all, I think you and Mom have some things to say to me." Padmé couldn't

contain her laughter.

"What's so funny Padmé?" His wife smiled.

"Leia has a point. We never told them the truth."

"So Dad," Luke finally spoke up. Kenobi's death had hit him hard as well. The boy felt left out of the banter—he wanted a piece of normalcy if only for a flickering moment. "What really happened back in the Clone Wars?" Anakin adjusted his robes and played with the hilt of his lightsaber. He stared out into space for a moment and then let his shoulders drop till he relaxed. Anakin thought long and hard about the answers. A flood of memories came back to him as he was brought back to a time long before they lived in hiding—a time of war and love.

"We we're in a very big battle—probably the biggest fight between two fleets that the galaxy had ever seen up to that point—and it was all your mother's fault—" with those lines he began his story.

* * *

><p>Nineteen years earlier. Above the planetary atmosphere of Coruscant.

A raging battle took place in the space overlooking the capital system of the Galactic Republic. Republican ships waged heated battle with Confederation battle cruisers. It was a perfect mess. Young Jedi Knight Anakin Skywalker flew his old model X-Wing leading a squadron of Republican soldiers against a mix of droid fighters and Sith interceptors.

"This is Gold Leader—" Anakin spoke over the comm. "All fighters accounted for?" They all reported with their call signs in the affirmative.

"Anakin," a familiar voice rang over the comm. It was General Obi-Wan Kenobi.

"I hear you Blue Leader—Obi-Wan, what's your status."

"All my fighters are accounted for—Blue Squadron will provide cover you to attack the _Invisible Hand_—it may be our only shot at stopping Dooku and Grievous before this gets any more out of control."

"Gold Leader out. All fighters follow my lead. Lock S-Foils in attack position." All the X-Wings in Gold Squadron prepared for battle as Blue Squadron's Y-Wings went ahead of them to confront the mass of Confederate starships. As they did so, Anakin could see a large group of early Star Destroyers and Alderaanian frigates moving into position and began laying down heavy fire mixing ion cannons with a constant barrage of proton torpedoes. The odds were clearly in the Republic's favor. The Confederation of Independent Systems was ill-advised to attack so hastily. That gave Anakin pause as he began to engage the Sith interceptors closest to him. They had drones, not fully-trained Sith pilots, at the helm. That made them dangerous but predictable in their strategy. He shot six down in rapid succession as he swerved to avoid oncoming fire and explosions. Kenobi's voice

came over the comm.

"I sense your distress my old friend. Don't worry, I am sure she's fine." Anakin breathed in deeply as he took his ship in circles and began engaging in several running dogfights.

"I'm worried about herâ€¦what can I say."

"There were no reports that Grievous captured anyone." Anakin didn't respond. He saw a group of ten fighters aiming for Kenobi's Y-Wing.

"Ben! Watch your flank!" Anakin exclaimed.

"I see them."

"All fighters push throughâ€¦give it everything you've gotâ€¦we'll meet at the rendezvous point by the main flagships." He paused. "May the Force be with you." He turned his attention to helping his friend. Anakin could hear Ben Kenobi's nervousness through the comm.

"There's too many of themâ€¦finish the mission Anakinâ€¦you have to stop Grievousâ€¦forget about me!"

"I can't do that Ben!" He slammed his ship at break-neck speed through a group of fighters shattering them in a hell of lasers and torpedoes. Then a fifth one fellâ€¦two more swung off of their pursuit of Kenobi and went after him. He did loops around them and made quick work of them. Finally, there were two fighters left. Anakin brought his X-Wing uncomfortably close to the fighters. R2-D2 let out some nervous beeps and whistles. "Artooâ€¦I know the stabilizers can't take much moreâ€¦trust me. Just hang in there." He pressed down on the controllers hard and fired two precise shots that destroyed the enemy vessels. Kenobi's relieved voice came over the comm.

"Thanks Anakin! I owe you." He laughed.

"I think that's eight times I've saved your life now old man!" Kenobi replied sarcastically.

"_Seven! _That time on Cato Neimodia doesn't count." Their chatter diminished significantly as they saw the menacing hull of the _Invisible Hand _in front of them.

"How do we want to play this out Ben?"

"We've gotta find an open hanger to ram through." As they got closer, Anakin spotted a large docking bay exposed to the fighting with very little in the way of defenses.

"Take a look over thereâ€¦you see it?" Obi-Wan squinted a bit, and then picked up what Anakin was aiming at.

"That'll do."

"Artoo, power up the thrusters!" The two ships came closer together and made a rough landing. When they slid to a stop, the two Jedi slowly opened the canopies of their ships and stepped out. "Artooâ€¦"

he whistled back to Anakin. "Watch the ships—we'll take care of this."

They moved only a few steps forward before a hologram appeared before them. It was Dooku.

"Welcome Master Kenobi—I see your little sideshow outside was really what I expected—a convenient distraction for you to board this ship. You will not get much further than you've come I can promise you that."

"The game's over Dooku—" Kenobi spoke out. "—you don't have the space or the speed to escape this time." The bearded Dark Jedi smiled as the hologram moved closer.

"Ah but you see, I always keep a bargaining chip for moments like this one." Anakin grew uncomfortable. Something was right, he was too confident.

"—What is he talking about Ben?" —Anakin asked through the Force. Ben replied quickly.

"—I have no idea—" Dooku cackled a bit as he rubbed his hands together.

"So the great Anakin Skywalker doesn't know what I have?"

"Enough of your games Dooku!" Exclaimed Anakin. The hologram of the Dark Lord stepped away for a moment and move the image toward a seat in the middle of the room where he was hiding. Anakin and Ben clearly saw a senator bound. She seemed scared but was doing her best not to show it. It was Padmā Amidala. "If you touch her I swear—" "

"You'll do what precisely?" Dooku taunted. "I am the one in the best bargaining position right now. I have something you want and you have something I want."

"If you're looking for a free pass out of Republican space—" Anakin said, "You can forget it."

"Oh no Anakin—I intend to stay here and fight." Dooku paused. "We will see each other soon Jedi scum!" With those words the image went away. Anakin gulped as the transmission ended.

"I promise we'll get your wife." Obi-Wan said clasping his apprentice's shoulder gently.

"I know—I know," he paused and took another breath. "—but that's not what's worrying me." Anakin sighed. Ben Kenobi spoke up again.

"He wants to stay and fight—."

"Ben, he's planning something. For the life of me I just don't know what it is."

****Chapter 8****

Padm  interrupted Anakin as he told the story to his children. "You aren't telling it properly." He smiled back at her.

"I am just telling the way I remember it that's all." Their children were looking at their mother expectantly as the _Falcon_ blasted through space. Padm  averred,

"Jedi Knights were not allowed to marry in the time of the Republic." she moved toward on the _Falcon's_ portholes and stared into space.

"So you married in secret?" Leia asked.

"Yes," her mother turned to her as she spoke. "For a long time Anakin and I didn't want to tell anyone, it could have caused a great scandal. He would have been expelled by the Jedi Order But we know at least a few people had to find out."

"Uncle Ben," Luke said.

"He was the first one we told, and he swore he'd keep our secret. Anakin also had an apprentice a young girl Force knows where she is now if she survived the Purg but we told her as well. My family on Naboo Owen and Beru and that was it " Padm  seemed very said.

"Dad what happened to all the Jedi?" Luke asked. Leia moved closer to her mother. Anakin was the one who responded.

"For over a thousand generations the Jedi Knights were the guardians of peace and justice in the Old Republic before the Empire took over and nearly wiped us all out."

* * *

><p>Nineteen years earlier. Aboard the Invisible Hand.

They had made it to the main control room where they found Padm  seated on a chair, her wrists bound to the arms of the metallic chair. Dooku was nowhere to be found. Anakin forgot about protocol and ran toward his young wife.

"Ani!" She shouted.

"You all right?" He asked as he kissed her forehead gently.

"Yes." She replied. Obi-Wan was decidedly more cautious as he moved next to his apprentice keeping his eyes on the large metallic doors behind them. Anakin moved to free his wife. They embraced briefly. Padm  turned to face Kenobi.

"My lady, it's good to see you unharmed." The older Jedi bowed slightly before the senator. He paused for a moment. "Anakin, this is too easy." Anakin nodded his head as he faced his wife.

"Where did Dooku go?"

"I don't know. He left right after he spoke to you on Holo." The two

Jedi exchanged a nervous glance.

"I don't like it Ben."

"Neither do Iâ€¦I sense a trap."

"We had no choiceâ€¦" Anakin replied.

"True, but he knew that. He's planning on staying to fightâ€¦what could that mean?" Suddenly Kenobi's eyes opened widely as he noticed numbers on the large array of computer screens near the doorway. "By the Force, he's going to blow the ship up!" PadmÃ© and Anakin both spoke up simultaneously.

"WHAT!?" Anakin rubbed his wife's back gently and moved closer to PadmÃ©.

"Look at the consolesâ€¦" Anakin saw a series of numbers flickering on the screens that were rapidly declining in value, they were getting smallerâ€¦it was a countdown.

"Well-played Dookuâ€¦" Anakin paused. "If he's smart, he's probably locked us up in here."

"How do you want to play this out Anakin?" Asked Kenobi. The younger Jedi fiddled with the hilt of his lightsaber as he tried to think of a way out of this mess.

"He won't be able to destroy the entire shipâ€¦" Kenobi realized what Anakin was suggesting.

"That's too risky Anakin."

"What choice do we have Obi-Wanâ€¦we're all out of options?" PadmÃ© spoke up.

"What are you guys planning?" Anakin raised his hand up telling her to wait as he used the comm to hail Artoo.

"Artooâ€¦the ship is on self-destructâ€¦I need you to reach the mainframe and get yourself as close to the bridge as possible." A few affirmative beeps and whistles were all he got back in response. Anakin turned to face PadmÃ©. "Dooku thinks he's got us corneredâ€¦but he didn't count on having a crazy Jedi like meâ€¦We're going to have to crash land a ship that's about to explode. Get strapped in and ready."

End
file.